

Dumb Friends League Vice President of Development

Colorado's leading provider of services for animals, Dumb Friends League, seeks an ambitious fundraising professional who values animals and people to lead Board and staff in a strategic contributed revenue program designed to expand fundraising for annual operations and new initiatives.

For 114 years, [Dumb Friends League](#) has been working to end pet homelessness and animal suffering in Colorado by providing a strong and steadfast voice for those who cannot speak for themselves. Delivering comprehensive direct services to more than 23,000 lost, homeless or abused pets and equines each year, the League is the largest community-based animal welfare organization in the Rocky Mountain Region. Working together in a united coalition to create the best outcomes for all animals, promote safe communities and nurture the human animal bond, Dumb Friends League provides sheltering, adoptions, lost and found services, behavior training, and veterinary care. The organization also participates in advocacy, leads humane education, offers intake diversion, and conducts animal cruelty investigations.

The League has six facilities including:

- Three shelters – The Leslie A. Malone Center in Denver, The Buddy Center in Castle Rock, The San Luis Valley Animal Center in Alamosa – for homeless pets that offer adoptions, pet admission, lost-and-found services and human education classes for the public.
- The Harmony Equine Center in Franktown, a private rehabilitation and adoption center for equine victims of mistreatment as well as horses that come from partner humane societies and rescue groups to receive professional training and opportunities for new lives.
- Solutions-Veterinary Hospital at CSU Spur in Denver, a fully donor-subsidized service animal hospital for owned pets to prevent and alleviate suffering in animals whose caretakers would otherwise be unable to provide medical care.
- Solutions-Cat Spay/Neuter Clinic in Denver, which offers free spay/neuter surgeries and FVRCP and (age appropriate) rabies vaccinations for Colorado cats, including owned and community cats.

Dumb Friends League has an annual operating budget of \$32M and in FY2023 received approximately \$25M in revenue, gains, and other support (including \$9M in contributions from individuals, corporations and foundations and \$8.5M in bequests). The organization, which is in the early stages of a rebranding campaign, has a staff of 301, 1463 volunteers and a 20-member Board.

THE POSITION

The search for the VP of Development is a result of the League's commitment to driving its mission forward by providing innovative and strategic leadership for a comprehensive development program. As a member of the senior leadership team, the VP of Development reports to the President and CEO and will work closely with the CEO and Board on strategy and in their fundraising efforts and will bring expertise, best practices and inspiring leadership to the League's overall development pursuits.

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In collaboration with the President and CEO and Board, the VP of Development will set and articulate all fundraising strategies; oversee the identification, cultivation, solicitation and stewardship of new and existing donor/philanthropists, corporations and foundations; oversee all development activities; foster a culture of philanthropy throughout the organization; and provide inspiring, transparent leadership and management to the Development staff, thus ensuring that the team is focused, results-driven, and accountable. The VP of Development oversees a staff of 12 including 5 direct reports.

The VP will personally identify, cultivate, solicit, and steward a major/principal gift level of donors in order to expand and diversify Dumb Friends League's donor base and will work closely with other team members to secure funding for new initiatives. In addition, the VP will work closely with and support the Board of Directors as they take on a more active fundraising role.

The VP of Development's immediate priorities in the first six months are to:

- Thoroughly understand Dumb Friends League's services – its history, culture, traditions, programs, personalities, and constituencies; understand its base of financial support and the short- and long-term funding requirements of the organization.
- Immediately assess the "state of play" of in-process fundraising efforts and provide support for those efforts; assume a hands-on role in the identification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship of major gifts from individuals and in growing institutional support from corporations and foundations.
- In collaboration with the CEO, develop a fundraising strategy that includes clear fundraising goals and success metrics (department, program and individual), target segments, constituent outreach, donor stewardship, staff and Board engagement, technology and data management, donor segmentation, management processes, objectives for individual, institutional and corporate fundraising, success metrics, identification of staff and Board members who will be actively involved in fundraising, and definition of roles, targets, and fundraising goals.
- Formulate and manage annual and capital development budgets, track financial performance, prepare necessary interim financial reports and fundraising projections, and monitor expenditures.
- Manage and personally engage in solicitation and stewardship activities in collaboration with the CEO, Board, and other staff; provide leadership and coaching to assist others in their fundraising success; oversee the development and implementation of a donor stewardship program aimed at cultivating deeper ties with donors.
- Provide inspiring leadership and management to the Development team; ensure team is engaged, provided with professional development, and given the tools to do their best work; establish work plans, performance objectives, and goals; regularly review results, and maintain a professional culture that aligns with the League's core values and motivates performance.
- Train, mentor and support Board members and executive staff in donor and prospect cultivation, engagement, relationship management, and donor solicitation, seeking ways to establish and maintain key external alliances and maximize donor participation.

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- Assess the current infrastructure to ensure tools, systems and processes for moves management, donor engagement/stewardship, and communications evolve, are scalable, and can serve as a solid foundation for future campaigns.
- Supervise the execution of deferred giving, estate planning, and bequest programs.
- Oversee, with the CEO, special events; ensure event sponsorship; work with venues, vendors, and event planners.
- In collaboration with the Marketing team, expand the public's awareness of Dumb Friends League – its mission, values, outcomes, and stories – through consistent and effective communications via direct mail, website, social media, donor material, and other collateral; plan and execute special events that promote the organization and its impact.
- Measure the success and report regularly on the progress of development strategy and programs; provide and present statistical analysis to the CEO, Board, and senior management on the success of various fundraising initiatives.

Additionally, on an ongoing basis, the VP of Development's responsibilities include:

- Serve as a member of the executive leadership team and, as such, actively participate in strategic decision-making regarding the League's revenue development and financial strategy and the establishment of short- and long-term fundraising goals and priorities.
- Work with the executive leadership team and Board of Directors to develop and maintain a strategic perspective in organizational direction, as well as program and service delivery. Ensure effective operations and alignment with the League's mission and strategic plan.
- Be a passionate, visible and informed advocate for the League. Actively seek opportunities to engage with the broader community and participate in events that increase visibility. Represent the League at special events, community meetings, conferences, etc. to promote and further the League's mission.
- Remain apprised of advancements and changes pertinent to philanthropic trends in the industry, funding sources, animal welfare industry, and the fundraising and development profession. Direct and lead adaptations to the League's fundraising plans in accordance with these changes and as necessary to maintain best practices.
- In alignment with the League's commitment to Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion (DEAI), create and implement development strategies specifically aligned with engaging diverse communities.

IDEAL EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

The successful candidate will be someone who values animals and people with a passion for, and ability to, compellingly articulate the League's mission. Additionally, the VP of Development will have:

- 10+ years of experience in attracting financial support from individuals, foundations and businesses; demonstrated results in personally cultivating and sustaining donors and soliciting six- to eight-figure major and planned gifts.

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- Broad-based knowledge of various development activities including web, social media, direct mail, proposal development, event planning and management, direct solicitations, and leveraging fundraising databases and support systems for donor segmentation.
- Demonstrated skills in motivating, directing, and managing staff, holding them accountable and in coordinating and supporting the fundraising activities of others; a good listener and strategist; comfortable receiving input from many sources; able to analyze and formulate disparate information into a sound, well-organized plan.
- Exceptional organizational skills; ability to manage and juggle competing priorities; excellent follow-through and attention to detail.
- A resourceful individual with a high energy level and a can-do attitude; a self-starter, problem solver, and strategic and big-picture thinker.
- Outstanding oral and written communication skills with exceptional attention to detail and the ability to articulate a compelling case for existing programs and new initiatives; a confident public speaker and presenter; the ability to work effectively with individuals from diverse backgrounds.
- Extroverted and fearless: derives energy from connecting with individuals, aligning the case for support, creating opportunities for engagement and building enthusiasm for the League.
- Sophisticated interpersonal skills with a very good sense of humor and the flexibility and sensitivity to work with diverse personalities and situations.

Salary Range: \$150,000 - \$180,000 annually

This position requires travel to different works sites and events within Colorado. Dumb Friends League is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, disability, political affiliation, marital or family status, age, military service, or other non-merit factors.

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